

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

TRAVEL PROCEDURES

The following is the La Joya ISD School Board Policy.

La Joya ISD
108912

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

DEE
(LOCAL)

PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED	An employee shall be reimbursed for reasonable, allowable expenses incurred in carrying out District business only with the prior approval of the employee's immediate supervisor.
TRAVEL EXPENSES	Reimbursement for authorized travel shall be in accordance with legal requirements. Accounting records shall accurately reflect that no state or federal funds were used to reimburse travel expenses beyond those authorized for state employees.
DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED	For any authorized expense incurred, the employee shall submit a statement, with receipts to the extent feasible, documenting actual expenses and in accordance with administrative procedures.

Employee Travel

Employees authorized to travel for business and educational purpose on behalf of the district shall be reimbursed for all usual and customary travel-related expenses made on behalf and in connection with District business according to District rates and state law. The processes established herein have been developed on the premise that employees will use good judgment and prudence in the expenditure of District funds when traveling. Travelers are expected to select the most economical and practical accommodations, arrangements and services in accordance with the needs of the trip. All travelers, as well as supervisors approving travel, are responsible for compliance with the provisions of the district's travel expense and the funding source rules and regulations.

A staff member who anticipates traveling at the district's expense or during scheduled work hours must adhere to the following procedures:

- Complete and submit a Travel/Reimbursement Request Form (copy attached) to immediate supervisor at least 15 days prior to the anticipated travel date for approval. (PLEASE ADHERE TO THE DEADLINE WHEN SUBMITTING VOUCHERS THAT NEEDS SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL.)
- If the immediate supervisor approves the travel request, the Travel/Reimbursement Request Form is forwarded to the next level of approval if required (See section "g" below for required approvals). Completed form must be returned to the requesting campus/department.
- The Travel Request/Reimbursement Form (yellow) copy must be completed and submitted, in order to receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred after the trip. Itemized receipts for airline tickets, hotel accommodations, meals, and if appropriate, car rentals, cab fares or parking fees must be submitted to receive reimbursement. In addition, a copy of conference/workshop agenda or certificate of attendance must be attached. Please refer to "Travel Documentation" for additional requirements. The traveler and the immediate supervisor must sign the Travel/Reimbursement Request Form before sending it to the Budget and Finance Department.
- Any person who travels out-of-district (in-state) at the district's expense or during regular workdays without prior written approval will be docked at the daily salary rate.
- **The Travel Request/Reimbursement Form** and attachments are official, auditable documents; therefore, they should be accurate and complete. (You may obtain these forms at the District Print Shop.)

If you have any questions regarding any of these procedures, please contact Mr. Joel Trevino at the Finance Department, Ext. 5028.

Employee Travel (Continued)

Supervisors have the following responsibilities prior to authorizing travel using the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form.

- a. Ensure funds are available based upon estimated travel costs prior to authorizing travel reimbursements.
- b. Ensure that the individual traveling is informed and aware of these travel regulations.
- c. Travel must be overnight in nature to be eligible for a meal allowance.
- d. The employee should include a reasonable accurate estimate of expenses on the travel request/reimbursement form. The travel request/reimbursement form is to be used for all expense reimbursement requests.
- e. La Joya ISD does not advance for meals, mileage and lodging.
- f. Rental of vehicles is not allowed, unless prior approval by Superintendent is granted.
- g. Required Approval:

- **In-Region (Non-Overnight)**

Supervisor approval required. In-region travel request must be submitted and approved 3 days prior to date of travel. Mileage reimbursement for in-region travel will be done after returning from the conference. Mileage reimbursements will be made using the published mileage Chart. In addition, a copy of conference/workshop agenda or certificate of attendance must be attached.

- **In-Region (Over-Night)**

Assistant Superintendent approval required. All in-region travel requests must be submitted and approved 15 days prior to date of travel. Reimbursement for in-region travel will be done after returning from the conference. All itemized receipts for lodging, meals, flight, taxi fare, etc. must be submitted together with travel request/reimbursement form to claim reimbursement. In addition, a copy of conference/workshop agenda or certificate of attendance must be attached.

- **Out-of-Region I Travel**

Assistant Superintendent approval required. All out-of-region travel requests must be submitted and approved 15 days prior to date of travel. Reimbursement for out-of-region travel will be done after returning from conference. All itemized receipts for lodging, meals, flight, taxi fare, etc. must be submitted together with travel request/reimbursement form to claim reimbursement. In addition, a copy of conference/workshop agenda or certificate of attendance must be attached.

Employee Travel (Continued)

- **Out-of-State Travel**

Superintendent's approval required. All out-of-state travel requests must be submitted and approved 15 days prior to date of travel. Reimbursement for out-of-region travel will be done after returning from conference. All itemized receipts for lodging, meals, flight, taxi fare, etc. must be submitted together with travel/reimbursement form to claim reimbursement. In addition, a copy of conference/workshop agenda or certificate of attendance must be attached.

- **Federal-State Funds**

If travel is being made using federal or state funds, the program director/coordinator for that program must approve travel.

- h. The Superintendent of Schools must approve any exceptions to these requirements.

Employee Travel (Continued)

ACCOMODATIONS

Lodging - Reimbursement for cost of hotel accommodations shall be made at actual cost. In cases where state and federal monies are used for lodging, reimbursements from state and federal monies will be made according to the Federal Rate Schedule (inclusive of taxes). The difference from actual cost and the Federal Rate Schedule may be paid from the General Fund. Campuses and/or departments must have monies budgeted in their General Fund travel accounts. Employees are encouraged to share rooms when possible. If an employee chooses to stay in a room by themselves, the maximum reimbursement rate will be the lower of actual cost or the Federal Rate Schedule. (Itemized receipts required)

The federal rate schedule is available at:

<https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php>.

Since reimbursement rates can change, a print out of rates must be kept and attached to reimbursement form. Itemized receipts are required.

In-State

For In-state travel, the Federal Rate Schedule will be used for Texas cities as listed. If city is not listed on the schedule the reimbursement rate will be the standard rate (currently \$77.00 per night).

Out-of-State

For out-of-state travel, the Federal Rate Schedule will be used. If city is not listed on the schedule the reimbursement rate will be the standard rate (currently \$77.00 per night).

Meals - In-State

Meals will be reimbursed for actual cost not to exceed \$36.00 per calendar day. Meal reimbursement shall be \$8.00 for breakfast. Departure time must be 6:30a.m. or earlier. Return time to district must be at least 6:30 a.m. or later to claim allowance. Lunch will be at \$ 14.00 if departure time is 10:00 a.m. or earlier and return time to district must be at least 12:00 noon or later to claim allowance. Dinner will be paid at \$14.00 if departure time is 6:30 p.m. or earlier and return time to district must be at least 6:30 p.m. or later to claim allowance. Lunch is not reimbursable to employees attending meetings during scheduled working hours. **(Itemized receipts required)**

Employee Travel (Continued)

Out-of-State

Meals will be reimbursed for actual cost not to exceed the Federal Rate Schedule.
(Itemized receipts required)

In-State Day Trips

- Travel may be reimbursed for the actual cost of the employee meals not to exceed \$36.00/day.
- Travel must be more than six consecutive hours to claim meal reimbursement.

MILEAGE/AIRLINE/AUTOMOBILE

The Board has established reimbursement rates of \$.555 (**55.5 cents**) per mile for authorized travel by automobile. No advance payment available. The mileage will be determined by the published mileage chart. If destination is not available on the mileage chart, mileage will be determined using the bing website at www.bing.com or the yahoo website at www.maps.yahoo.com. Employee must print out the driving directions provided by site and attach them to travel reimbursement form. Travelers are required to select the shortest and most economical route but may justify the selection of another route if it was chosen for safety reasons.

When an employee chooses to use automobile transportation rather than air transportation, the reimbursement to the employee will be the lesser of the two amounts. In determining air transportation cost, total amount should include airfare, taxi fare or shuttle costs. (Ex. If the flight is \$98.00 round trip, the cost of shuttles to and from the host hotel is \$ 40.00, and the automobile allowance is \$ 180.00, the reimbursement will be \$ 138.00 for anyone choosing to travel by automobile.) Reimbursement shall be made for actual expense of commercial carrier at less than first class accommodations. All travelers are encouraged to make airline reservations as early as possible in order to receive discount rates. Before making flight reservations, a purchase order needs to be provided, in advance, to the agency. (All employees must adhere to purchase order procedures when arranging flight reservations.)

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE

The district shall be responsible for early conference registration fees only. Discrepancies between early registration rate and actual conference rate costs will be the responsibility of the traveler. If the registration is voluntarily canceled, it is the responsibility of the employee to reimburse the district for the total fee paid by District.

District funds (local, state, or federal) are not to be used by employees to pay for professional/organizational membership dues. If the dues are part of a conference registration fee, payments for these dues are not to be requested.

Employee Travel (Continued)

OTHER EXPENSES

Reimbursement of airport parking, taxi fare, car rental (if approved in advance by the Superintendent) or other necessary expenditures will be provided if receipts are submitted. Other necessary expenses incurred by District personnel in connection with official District business, and pre-approved by the Superintendent, are recoverable through reimbursement. (A receipt must accompany all expense claims) If air transportation was used, luggage fees will only be reimbursed for first luggage.

CANCELLATION OF TRAVEL

A cancellation of an approved request for travel in which district funds have been expended will require full reimbursement to the district by the employee, unless the monies expended are refunded by the conference committee/agency. Approved substitutions can be made at direct supervisor's request. For extreme emergency cancellations, the Superintendent may exempt the staff member from full reimbursement. All arrangements for refunds from the conference committee/agency will be the sole responsibility of the employee requesting the travel permission. District secretaries or personnel other than the traveler may not be involved in requesting the refund.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Any district staff member who plans to be a presenter at a regional, state, or national conference or meeting must have prior approval of the program/presentation proposal from his/her direct supervisor and the Superintendent. If the presentation is the result of an invitation, the written invitation must be submitted for approval from his/her direct supervisor to the Superintendent. District travel procedures must also be followed, even if all travel expenses will be covered by the employee or by an agency/group from outside the district.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation must be attached to travel reimbursement form and/or purchase order:

- Name of the individual traveling
- Destination and purpose of trip, including how it was necessary to accomplish the objectives of the grant project
- Dates of Travel, time of departure/arrival
- Actual Mileage
- Receipts of actual amount expended on lodging per day
- Receipts of actual amount expended on meals per day (tips and gratuities not allowed)
- Receipts of actual amount expended on rental car (if previously approved by the Superintendent)

Employee Travel (Continued)

- Total amount reimbursed to the employee
- Copy of the federal rate schedule
- Copy of conference/workshop agenda or certificate of attendance

USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS

Executive Order 13513 signed by President Obama on October 1, 2009 prohibits employees traveling with Federal funds from sending, receiving text messages or checking email while driving. The United States Department of Education has stressed that this rule applies to grantees and sub-grantees of Federal funds. Since La Joya ISD is funded significantly by the Federal Funds, employees in traveling status while conducting school related business must be in compliance with this EO.

IN DISTRICT MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

La Joya ISD currently reimburses for in-district mileage for its employees at .555/mile. This reimbursement will be done as long as budget allows.

- A purchase order must be opened for each employee traveling.
- The In-district mileage chart must be used. If destination is not available, the odometer reading is to be used.
- Verify that employee's address is correct, if not submit a vendor master form requesting a change of address (form available on the La Joya ISD Accounts Payable Website).
- The In-District Mileage Form (available on the La Joya ISD Accounts Payable Website) must be used to log all trips made using the odometer reading if site visited is not listed on the In-District Mileage Chart.
- Mileage is calculated from campus to destination campus, not from home to destination.
- Form must be signed by traveler and approved by immediate supervisor.
- Plan accordingly if visiting several campuses on same day.
- If federal funds are being used, mileage reimbursement must coincide with grant beginning and ending dates.